

Iowa's Teacher Equity Plan

Submitted by the Iowa Department of Education

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The state of Iowa data from both the Iowa Department of Education (DE) Bureau of Planning, Research, and Evaluation and the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners (BOEE) indicate that 95 percent of the overall statewide courses in the specific academic areas required by No Child Left Behind are taught by teachers who meet the federal definition of "highly qualified." For schools in need of improvement, the percentage of highly qualified teachers is 94.3 percent. For Title I schools in need of improvement, the percentage of highly qualified teachers is 97.5 percent. According to this data, there are no proven inequities in the overall percent of highly qualified teachers in high-poverty, low-performing schools vs. the state in general. However, within content areas, there are some differences. The state of Iowa has undertaken steps to address areas of concern. These steps include recruiting and retaining new teachers in shortage areas (e.g., forgivable loans, mentoring and induction, teacher intern program), attracting and retaining in-service teachers in shortage areas (e.g., Market Factor Pay), professional development opportunities for teachers who work in low-performing schools (e.g., Iowa Professional Development Plan, Schools in Need of Assistance (SINA) support team, Teacher Development Academies), and building other supports in the system (e.g., mentoring of new building principals, Balanced Leadership training, Evaluator Approval training). These steps are outlined in more detail in the plan that follows.

- I. **Data and Reporting Systems:** How is the state planning to develop the teacher data and reporting systems needed to identify and correct inequities in teacher distribution in high poverty/high minority schools?
 - A. Current policies and programs:
 - i. Data on individual Iowa teachers: At the beginning of each school year, information on licensed staff is collected from schools through the Licensed Staff Detail report on the Basic Educational Data Survey (BEDS). The following data is collected for each individual teacher in current teaching positions:
 1. The salary of the teacher
 2. The teaching assignment(s) including grade level and subject area
 3. The number of years of teaching experience in district
 4. The number of years of teaching experience in total
 5. The advanced degree(s) of the teacher
 6. Race/ethnicity
 7. District and building assignment(s)
 8. Number of contract days for the school year
 9. Birth year and day
 10. Teacher folder number (this is matched with the BOEE's records to ensure proper licensure of teachers)

- ii. Retention rate of beginning teachers: The state collects data on how many first and second year teachers stay in teaching for a third year. This data is collected as part of Iowa's state-funded mentoring and induction program to retain more teachers. To date, the data shows that mentoring of new teachers (1st and 2nd year teachers) has been successful in increasing retention.
 - iii. Teacher licensure: The BOEE is an independent board that has the responsibility for licensing Iowa teachers and administrators. The BOEE has electronic information about each Iowa educator including type of license and teaching endorsement areas. Iowa law does NOT permit unlicensed teachers in Iowa districts. All Iowa teachers have teaching licenses. All teachers have either an initial license if in their first two years of teaching, a standard license, or have a standard license and are working toward an endorsement to become *additionally* qualified to teach specific courses. The BOEE website can be viewed at <http://www.state.ia.us/boee/#b>. The public has access to view the teaching license/endorsement areas for any given Iowan who holds a teaching license at <https://www.iowaonline.state.ia.us/boee/>.
 - iv. Anticipated teacher shortage areas: The DE annually calculates teacher shortage areas. This calculation is based upon the projected retirements of teachers in various teacher endorsement areas (e.g., high school math) as compared to the number of pre-service teachers in Iowa teacher preparation programs in the same field. (The majority of new teachers hired in Iowa are from Iowa teacher preparation programs rather than from out-of-state preparation programs.)
 - v. Monitoring of teachers being appropriately licensed: All Iowa teachers are required by Iowa law to have an Iowa teaching license. The DE school improvement consultants regularly monitor the teaching staff in each district to ensure that teachers are appropriately licensed for their teaching assignments. This data is provided through a cross match of the annual BEDS data on teaching assignments and teacher "folder" numbers matched with licensure information from the BOEE. Districts are notified via "site visit reports" when teachers do not appear to have teaching assignments aligned to their teaching license and endorsements. If teachers are identified who do not have proper licensure/endorsements, the district is provided a timeframe in which to have the teacher take necessary coursework in order to become properly licensed. The school improvement consultants verify that corrective action has been taken. In the 2006 legislative session, the Iowa General Assembly provided funding to increase the number of school improvement consultants in order to provide greater monitoring of federal and state requirements, including highly qualified teacher requirements.
- B. Next steps:
- i. Analysis of Iowa's teacher quality legislation: The Iowa General Assembly has invested in teacher quality since 2001. In that year, the General Assembly established the "Student Achievement and Teacher Quality Program," a program that consists of several components which are described later. As part of the data and reporting system, the DE will be analyzing the data for Iowa's teacher quality program and reporting to the General Assembly in January of 2007. Any needed modifications for the program will be recommended at that time.
 - ii. Reporting of data to the public: Iowa school districts are required to report the number of highly qualified teachers to their public on an annual basis through the online Annual Progress Report (APR). The state also reports data

about teacher qualifications in two ways: The annual State Report Card for No Child Left Behind and the Annual Condition of Education Report. Iowa's next steps are to further refine an online APR so that districts can easily provide data to the public, including data about highly qualified teachers.

- iii. Analysis of teacher inequities: On an annual basis, the DE examines the data concerning highly qualified teachers to ensure that high poverty and high minority schools do not have a higher percent of teachers who are not highly qualified per federal definitions. The BOEE has noted that the requirements for endorsements in the specific fields of sciences and social sciences require additional hours beyond generalist endorsement. The BOEE continues to examine those requirements to ensure fairness across all secondary content areas. The trend data indicate that high poverty and high minority schools do not generally have a disproportionate number of teachers who are not highly qualified. Title I schools identified for improvement have a higher percentage of highly qualified staff at the elementary school as compared to the state percentage. Trend data show that the greatest challenge in attracting and retaining qualified teachers occurs in our small rural high schools (which are not high poverty nor high minority). See tables below.

PERCENT OF HIGHLY QUALIFIED PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS BY ACADEMIC AREA SCHOOL YEAR 04-05			
Academic Area	State Percentage of Highly Qualified	Schools in Need of Improvement Percentage of Highly Qualified	Title 1 Schools in Need of Improvement Percentage of Highly Qualified
English	98.2	95.9	
Reading/Language Arts	93.9	86.6	
Mathematics	97.3	95.9	
Science	88.3	89.6	
Foreign/Language	91.3	92.4	
Civics/Government	81.3	89.4	
Economics	67.5	68.8	
Arts	97.9	96.8	
History	90.0	87.7	
Geography	50.5	38.5	
Elementary	96.8	88.4	97.5
Total	95.0	94.3	97.5

Source: Iowa Department of Education, Licensure and Staff Files.

- iv. Analysis of secondary teacher inequities: The data indicate that the teacher salaries in our rural high schools are lower than our high poverty, high minority schools. Also the data show that the number of daily teacher preparations required in rural high schools are greater than in our high poverty, high minority schools. Next steps are to continue to annually track the data to ensure that inequities are not emerging in the state's high poverty, high minority schools.

**Average Total Salaries of
Iowa Full-Time Public School Teachers by
Enrollment Category, 1985-86, 2003-04 and 2004-05**

Enrollment Category	1985-86	Average Salary 2003-2004	2004-2005	% Salary Change 1985-86 to 2004-05	% Salary Change 2003-04 to 2004-05
<250	\$16,347	\$31,292	\$32,441	98.5%	3.7%
250-399	\$17,971	\$33,016	\$33,999	89.2%	3.0%
400-599	\$19,198	\$35,424	\$36,253	88.8%	2.3%
600-999	\$20,079	\$37,004	\$37,852	88.5%	2.3%
1,000-2,499	\$21,616	\$39,204	\$40,210	86.0%	2.6%
2,500-7,499	\$23,835	\$41,131	\$42,091	76.6%	2.3%
7,500+	\$24,041	\$42,894	\$43,787	82.1%	2.1%
State	\$21,690	\$39,432	\$40,344	86.0%	2.3%

Source: Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Basic Educational Data Survey, Staff Files, Division of Financial and Information Services, Certified Enrollment Files.

Notes: State total includes AEA teachers. Figures for 2003-04 and 2004-05 represent average salaries for full-time public school staff with teaching position codes. Approximately 5,000 full-time public school staff in 2003-04 and 2004-05 with teaching codes also reported that they served in the capacity of administrator and/or student support services personnel. Average salaries for these staff include salaries for these additional responsibilities as well.

**Average Number of
Teaching Assignments for
Iowa Full-time Public School Teachers in Grades 9-12 by
Enrollment Category 1985-86, 2003-04 and 2004-05**

Enrollment Category	1985-86			2003-04			2004-05		
	Number of Districts	Number of Grade 9-12 Teachers	Average Number of Assignments	Number of Districts	Number of Grade 9-12 Teachers	Average Number of Assignments	Number of Districts	Number of Grade 9-12 Teachers	Average Number of Assignments
<250	52	470	3.8	30	135	4.7	30	158	4.5
250-399	90	1,218	3.6	55	839	4.3	57	842	4.2
400-599	94	1,754	3.3	77	1,584	3.9	73	1,490	3.9
600-999	97	2,228	3.1	95	2,422	3.6	95	2,439	3.6
1,000-2,499	72	2,843	2.6	81	3,320	3.0	81	3,374	3.0
2,500-7,499	24	1,997	2.1	23	2,077	2.4	22	2,027	2.4
7,500+	8	2,349	2.0	9	2,503	2.1	9	2,439	2.1
State	437	12,859	2.7	370	12,880	3.1	367	12,769	3.0

Source: Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Basic Educational Data Survey, Staff Files, Division of Financial and Information Services, Certified Enrollment Files.

Note: State total includes AEA teachers.

II. **Teacher Preparation:** How is the state planning to build a pipeline of prospective teachers for high poverty, low performing schools?

A. Current policies and programs:

- i. Approval of teacher preparation programs: The Iowa State Board of Education has a statutory responsibility to approve Iowa-based teacher preparation programs. This approval process ensures that programs provide quality preparation experiences, not only in the campus-based coursework but also in field experiences and student teaching. The colleges/universities with teacher preparation programs actively work with local school districts to provide varied field experiences and student teaching including high poverty and high minority school buildings so that pre-service educators are well prepared.
- ii. Forgivable loans: Forgivable loans are available through the Iowa Student Loan Liquidity Corporation (ISLLC) in the amount of \$10 million dollars. These loans are made to individuals whose loans are forgiven by the Commission under the teacher shortage forgivable loan program. This exceeds the \$285,000 match appropriated by the state legislature under House File 2527. This match will allow ISLLC to match several years of future appropriations and will support teachers in specific content areas (shortage areas) in becoming highly qualified.
- iii. Mentoring and Induction of new teachers: The state of Iowa implemented successful mentoring and induction program requirements for beginning teachers as part of landmark legislation for teacher quality in 2001. The purpose of the program is to recruit and retain teachers new to the profession and to ensure high quality teachers in the classroom. The legislation calls for each of Iowa's 365 school districts and 11 area education agencies (AEAs) to provide a two-year mentoring and induction program. Iowa's AEAs have developed programs and support strategies for local districts. The Iowa legislature allocated \$2.4 million in the first year for the mentoring and induction program statewide. The amount allocated was \$4.35 million in 2005-06. The following table and explanation illustrates the success of retaining new teachers in Iowa over time. Retention of new teachers in Iowa has increased since the teacher quality legislation was implemented. Prior to implementation of the teacher quality legislation, 87 percent of the teachers who were first year teachers in 2000-01 returned to teach the next year. However, 92 percent of the teachers who were first year teachers in 2004-05 returned to teach in 2005-06. This was an increase of five percentage points. The percent of teachers returning to teach a second year is shaded in dark gray.

The percent of teachers in the classroom two years after their first year also increased. For example, of the 1810 first year teachers in the base year 2000-01, 1424 or 78.7 percent were in the classroom in 2002-03. On the other hand, 83.8 percent of the first year teachers in 2003-04 were in a school during the 2005-06 school year. This was an increase of 5.1 percentage points. Also note that there has been considerable variability in the number of first year teachers during the last six years. The number of first year teachers was greatest in 2000-01 and decreased for the next two years. During the last three years the number of first year teachers has slowly increased.

Public School District First Year Teacher Retention 2000-01 to 2005-06*

Year	Number of First Year Teachers in Base Year	Teachers Returning in 2001-2002	Teachers Returning in 2002-2003	Teachers Returning in 2003-2004	Teachers Returning in 2004-2005	Teachers Returning in 2005-2006
2000-2001 (Base year)	1810	1574 (87.0%)	1424 (78.7%)	1339 (74.0%)	1273 (70.3%)	1221 (67.5%)
2001-2002**	1614		1407 (87.2%)	1285 (79.6%)	1216 (75.3%)	1162 (72.0%)
2002-2003***	1269			1131 (89.1%)	1033 (81.4%)	975 (76.8%)
2003-2004	1432				1295 (90.4%)	1200 (83.8%)
2004-2005	1512					1391 (92.0%)
2005-2006	1590					

Source: Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Planning, Research and Evaluation Basic Educational Data Survey (BEDS) Staff Files.

*Data does not include teachers leaving Iowa to teach in other states.

**Mentoring and induction was first offered in 2001-2002.

***All beginning teachers were supported by mentoring and induction in 2002-2003.

- iv. Market Factor Pay: To help retain and recruit teachers in specific “hard-to-fill” content areas (e.g., secondary math, science and special education), the Iowa General Assembly established a new initiative entitled “Market Factor Pay” during the 2006 legislative session. This appropriation of \$3.39 million in 2006-07 will increase annually to \$10 million in 2008-09. The funds through this program will be sent to school districts and will allow those districts having difficulty hiring highly qualified teachers in areas such as mathematics, science and special education to pay additional salary bonuses to attract and retain teachers. The districts in Iowa facing the greatest challenge to attract and retain secondary teachers are the smaller, more rural districts. As noted in the previous section of this plan, these districts generally are not high poverty areas nor do they tend to enroll large numbers of minority students. The Market Factor Pay program will allow districts to pay additional salary to those teachers in locally identified shortage areas.

- v. Teacher intern: The BOEE has established a teacher intern teacher licensure program to help fill the need for qualified high school teachers, especially in small rural communities. This program permits approved teacher preparation programs (higher education) to provide preparation to individuals with at least a bachelor's degree in fields other than teaching. Individuals complete teacher preparation coursework, field experience and student teaching. The intern program focuses especially on secondary math and science for rural districts (an identified shortage area).
 - vi. Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant: (TQE) The DE, in partnership with Iowa's teacher preparation institutions (colleges/universities), has received a federal TQE grant to strengthen preparation of beginning teachers. One particular focus of the grant is to better prepare Iowa's teachers to work with diverse learners including those schools with high poverty and high minority populations. The preparation also focuses on how to successfully implement the consultative/collaborative teaching model (English language learners and students with IEPs).
- B. Next steps:
- i. Evaluation of initiatives: Iowa has implemented the above initiatives in an effort to prepare, recruit and retain highly qualified teachers. The state does not anticipate adding any new initiatives at this time since the effectiveness of the already instituted initiatives is evaluated on an annual basis. The teacher preparation program approval requires each program to be reviewed and approved every five years (State Board approval). The initiatives established by the Iowa General Assembly require regular written reports (Forgivable loans; Mentoring and Induction; Market Factor Pay). The TQE grant has retained Learning Points as the program evaluator.
- III. **Recruitment and Retention of Experienced Teachers:** How is the state planning to build a critical mass of qualified, *experienced* teachers willing to work in hard-to-staff schools? How is the state planning to reduce the incidence of out-of-field teaching in high-poverty and low-performing schools?
- A. Current policies and programs:
- i. Current Iowa rules and regulations: Iowa teachers must hold a valid Iowa teaching license in order to be employed in Iowa school districts. All Iowa teachers meet this requirement. Iowa does not have any unlicensed teachers employed in districts. All teachers have either an initial license if in their first two years of teaching, a standard license, or have a standard license and are working toward an endorsement to become *additionally* qualified to teach specific courses. The endorsements necessary to teach various grade levels and subject matter may be found at <http://www.state.ia.us/boee/addition.html>. The BOEE established the endorsement requirements.
 - ii. Iowa's Student Achievement and Teacher Quality Program: In 2001, the Iowa General Assembly passed landmark legislation, "Student Achievement and Teacher Quality Program." The legislation included (a). Mentoring and induction of beginning teachers (noted above in II.A.iii). It also created (b). The Iowa Teaching Standards that guide the professional development and evaluation of teachers; (c). Teacher Career Development Plan that outlines that quality professional development must incorporate research proven strategies (see the Iowa Professional Development Model at <http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/tqt/tc/doc/ipdm05.html>); (d). Iowa Teacher Career Path that was designed to compensate teachers with increasing salaries for advanced skills.

- iii. Minimum teacher salaries: As part of the annual appropriation for the Student Achievement/Teacher Quality Program, the Iowa General Assembly has provided Iowa's districts with funding to establish a minimum teacher salary level. Given that Iowa's smallest rural districts have the lowest salaries and have the most difficulty in attracting and retaining secondary math, science and special education teachers, the minimum teacher salary support has assisted these districts in establishing a more competitive salary schedule.
- iv. Increasing overall teacher salaries: During the 2006 legislative session, the Iowa General Assembly invested \$35 million in teacher salaries. Teacher salary data nationwide indicate that Iowa had slipped to 42nd in the nation in terms of teacher salaries. Attracting and retaining highly qualified teachers is a problem, especially losing teachers to border states such as Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. Data also indicated that secondary math and science teachers (shortage areas) are leaving teaching to enter related fields such as bioscience industries in order to realize larger salaries.
- v. Market Factor Pay: To help retain and recruit teachers in specific "hard-to-fill" content areas (e.g., secondary math, science and special education), the Iowa General Assembly established a new initiative entitled "Market Factor Pay" during the 2006 legislative session. This appropriation of \$3.39 million in 2006-07 will increase annually to \$10 million in 2008-09. The funds through this program will be sent to school districts and will allow those districts having difficulty hiring highly qualified teachers in areas such as mathematics, science and special education to pay additional salary bonuses to attract and retain teachers. The districts in Iowa facing the greatest challenge to attract and retain secondary teachers are the smaller, more rural districts. As noted in the previous section of this plan, these districts generally are not high poverty areas nor do they tend to enroll large numbers of minority students. The Market Factor Pay program will allow districts to pay additional salary to those teachers in locally identified shortage areas.
- vi. Financial support for teacher professional development: During the 2006 legislative session, the Iowa General Assembly provided \$10 million, sufficient to add one additional contract day for each teacher in Iowa for the purpose of quality professional development. The legislature also provided \$6.625 million for districts to use for professional development, salary enhancements or both.
- vii. Professional development in reading, math and science: The DE has instituted statewide efforts in partnership with the AEAs to improve teaching strategies in reading, math and science. Every Child Reads focuses on reading strategies K-12 with special focus on adolescent literacy being added in the past year. Every Student Counts emphasizes math strategies K-12. The newest initiative is Every Learner Inquires that will "launch" in the 2006-07 school year (science strategies). As is noted in more detail in IV.A.iii., Teacher Development Academies also emphasize research-based strategies for classroom teachers.
- viii. Support of National Board Certified (NBC) Teachers: In order to better prepare and retain experienced educators, the Iowa General Assembly supports NBC teachers. For fiscal year 2007, the Iowa General Assembly appropriated \$2.25 million for NBC teacher funding. They also established an annual appropriation of \$250,000 to establish an NBC teacher training and support program.

- ix. Iowa Learning Online: In order to ensure that students in Iowa's smallest rural districts have highly qualified teachers in shortage areas such as math and science, the state has established Iowa Learning Online (ILO). Iowa Learning Online, Iowa's online high school initiative, offers online courses in science (chemistry, physics and anatomy) and math (calculus) at no cost to school districts. The course catalog can be found at <http://www.iowalearningonline.org/>.
 - x. Iowa Online Advanced Placement (AP) Academy: While ILO provides "regular" high school courses via the Web, Iowa Online AP Academy offers advanced placement courses, especially for students in Iowa's smallest rural districts. The course catalog can be found at <http://www.education.uiowa.edu/belinblank/programs/ioapa/courselist.html>.
 - xi. Teachers from Spain: Another identified teacher shortage area in rural Iowa is for foreign language teachers. Iowa has established a program to place qualified teachers from Spain in Iowa's rural districts in order to meet the need for Spanish language teachers.
 - xii. Teach Iowa Website: This website is available at no cost to Iowa school districts and educators. The website <http://www.iowaeducationjobs.com/> allows districts to post vacancies as well as educators to post their qualifications. Iowa's districts of all sizes have found the website to be a useful teacher recruiting tool.
 - xiii. Use of HOUSSE: All teachers not new to the profession and hired by the end of the 2005-06 school year are highly qualified because they meet the state's definition of highly qualified. For further information on Iowa's definition of highly qualified, go to <http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/nclb/documents.html> and for the Iowa Criteria For Meeting the NCLB Requirements For Highly Qualified Teachers or HOUSSE (High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation). HOUSSE will still be needed for special education teachers, rural secondary teachers, international teachers or teachers coming from other countries to teach in Iowa, and experienced elementary teachers who leave the classroom for a period of time (e.g., to raise a family) and return to teach.
 - xiv. Role of the BOEE: The BOEE already has requirements in place for which all teachers in the categories of multi-subject secondary and multi-subject special education must be highly qualified within two years of the date of hire.
- B. Next steps:
- i. New initiatives: The state of Iowa implemented a number of new initiatives in both 2005 and 2006 to ensure that Iowa retained experienced teachers. No new initiatives are planned at this time.
 - ii. Analysis of Iowa's Teacher Quality legislation: The Iowa General Assembly has invested in teacher quality since 2001. In that year, the General Assembly established the "Student Achievement and Teacher Quality Program." That program consists of several components (described in III.A.ii). As part of the data and reporting system, the DE will be analyzing the data for Iowa's Teacher Quality program and reporting to the General Assembly in January of 2007. Any needed modifications for the program will be recommended at that time.
 - iii. Pay-for-Performance study: In order to investigate whether differentiated pay based upon performance will succeed in retaining quality teachers in the profession, the Iowa General Assembly (through legislation) and Iowa's Governor Tom Vilsack (through Executive Order) instituted a study of pay-for-performance. The study will be

undertaken in the summer and fall of 2006 with a report to the Governor and legislature no later than January 2007.

- iv. Use of Title IA and Title IIA funds: In an annual letter to all LEAs, the DE will promote the use of Title IA and Title IIA funds to address the needs of teachers who are not highly qualified. Schools who are not meeting AYP will be strongly encouraged to use funds for professional development to ensure teachers are highly qualified.

IV. **Professional Development:** How is the state planning to strengthen the skills, knowledge, and qualifications of teachers already working in high-poverty, low-performing schools?

A. Current policies and programs:

- i. School in Need of Assistance support network: For those schools identified as missing AYP, a SINA Support Team has been established to provide technical support. Members of the statewide SINA team work through a five-step process with each identified school. Data and information gathered in the audit phase are thoroughly analyzed. During the diagnosis phase, support team members work with local administrators and school leadership teams to search for root causes related to specific issues that contribute to poor academic performance. Schools develop an action plan during the design phase. Professional development targeted to the specific needs of staff is a required component of the action plans. Statewide support team members encourage schools to access available AEA staff with content area skills. Many schools voluntarily participate in statewide professional development initiatives such as Every Student Counts (State Math Initiative) and Every Child Reads (State Reading Initiative). Identified schools designate substantial additional professional development time. They also have incorporated teacher collaboration time with clearly articulated expectations for participants. During the implementation phase, Statewide Support Team members make quarterly visits to identified schools to offer assistance in the implementation process. Schools collect and analyze implementation data to determine effective implementation of professional development. The evaluation phase is interwoven throughout the process as well as a culminating activity. Leadership teams and building administrators are constantly evaluating the effectiveness of changes in instructional practice.
- ii. Iowa Professional Development Model: District career development/professional development plans are required by Iowa law. During the 2006 legislative session, the Iowa General Assembly provided \$10 million, sufficient to add one additional contract day for each teacher in Iowa for the purpose of quality professional development. The use of those funds for the professional development in reading, math, science and other content areas must be reported to the state by the LEA on an annual basis. The legislature also provided \$6.625 million for districts to use for professional development, salary enhancements or both. For information on the Professional Development Model, go to <http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/tqt/tc/doc/ipdm05.html>.
- iii. Teacher Development Academies (TDAs): For the second year, the DE has offered Teacher Development Academies to support teachers in the areas of student achievement in reading and math. The following Academies build teacher skills, especially for teachers in schools with struggling learners.

1. *Second Chance Reading* (SCR) is a program that provides a specific course for struggling readers at the middle and high school levels. In middle schools, struggling readers are assigned to a SCR class rather than their regular reading class. In high schools, SCR classes are treated as an elective course. The focus of SCR is on comprehension of both fiction and non-fiction texts, but vocabulary and fluency are addressed as well. The training includes the following strategies: read alouds, think alouds, inductive thinking, writing and graphic organizers, questioning strategies, vocabulary, fluency practice, and cooperative learning.
 2. *Question-Answer Relationships* (QAR) is a strategy that engages students in the process of differentiating the types of questions students could ask of text. QAR provides a framework for organizing comprehension strategy instruction across all grade levels and in a variety of subject areas. Students learn to distinguish between types of questions. Teaching students QAR gives students the language for talking about the strategies they use to answer questions. It helps students develop an awareness of their own cognitive processes when answering questions. QAR helps all readers at all grade levels benefit from learning to think about information sources used for asking and answering questions.
 3. *Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction* (CORI) is a research-based classroom instructional model emphasizing reading engagement, reading comprehension, and conceptual learning in science or other content areas designed for all students, including struggling readers. Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction fosters reading engagement and comprehension through the teaching of reading strategies while teaching content area concepts, inquiry skills, and explicitly supporting the development of students' intrinsic motivation to read. Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction contains conceptual themes, real world interactions, self-directed learning, and strategy instruction situated within conceptual contexts, peer collaborations, and self-expression of knowledge through portfolios and exhibits.
 4. *Cognitively Guided Instruction* (CGI) is a teacher professional development program based on over 20 years of research by Thomas Carpenter, Megan Franke, Linda Levi, Susan Empson and Victoria Jacobs. In CGI professional development, elementary school teachers learn a framework for how children learn the concepts of number operations and algebra. Teachers work to integrate this framework with their mathematics instruction. Cognitively Guided Instruction is not a curriculum. The knowledge teachers gain in a CGI workshop enhances how they implement any curriculum. Cognitively Guided Instruction teachers understand how their children think about mathematics and how children in general understand mathematics. Cognitively Guided Instruction teachers know how to use what their children currently understand to plan instructional activities for these students. Cognitively Guided Instruction teachers also understand what children need to learn about mathematics in elementary school so they will have a firm foundation upon which they can learn further mathematics.
- iv. Support for the co-teaching/collaborative model: The Iowa DE continues to sponsor a number of workshops in the co-teaching/collaborative teaching model for local educators and teacher preparation educators. This is particularly designed for co-teaching of special educators and general education staff (assists IEP students in succeeding

classrooms that are the least restrictive environment). The model is also helpful in situations where English language learners are in general education classrooms.

B. Next steps:

- i. Expand Teacher Development Academies: Evaluation of the effectiveness of TDAs has shown that the implementation of the strategies learned in the TDAs has a positive impact on student achievement. Given that only a limited number of teachers have been able to participate in TDAs, the DE will seek to expand funding for TDAs so more teachers/schools can benefit.
- ii. Seek to increase state funding for professional development: In partnership with the professional education organizations in Iowa (Iowa Association of School Boards, Iowa State Education Association, the School Administrators of Iowa), the DE and the AEAs proposed to the Iowa General Assembly that the state fund at least two professional development days for teachers. While the General Assembly did fund one day, it is anticipated that a recommendation will be made to the 2007 General Assembly that two days be funded to focus on building skills of teachers in reading and mathematics instruction.
- iii. Expand the SINA support team: The majority of schools that have had the benefit of SINA support team have shown achievement gains. In fact, the majority of Title I schools receiving the support have either moved to a delay status or have shown enough improvement over two years to be moved off the SINA list. However, as the Annual Measurable Objective increases (increasing percent of students must be considered proficient), the demand for SINA support will increase as well. Funding for SINA support is limited. Iowa DE needs to seek other funding sources so more individuals can be hired as part of SINA assistance.

V. **Specialized Knowledge and Skills:** How is the state planning to ensure that teachers have the specialized knowledge and skills they need to be effective with the populations of students typically served in high-poverty, low-performing schools?

A. Current policies and practices:

- i. Our Kids: Our Kids is a federally funded statewide initiative to provide professional development to Iowa teachers K-12. Our Kids focuses on all teachers, especially those teachers working in schools with English language learners. The goal of the Our Kids project is to decrease the achievement gap by increasing the language development and academic achievement of ELL through: (a). Professional development on second language acquisition; (b). Training in the specific content areas of math, science and language arts/reading; (c). Provide resources and training using technology. See <http://www.state.ia.us/ourkids/>.
- ii. Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant: (TQE) The DE, in partnership with Iowa's teacher preparation institutions (colleges/universities) has received a federal TQE grant to strengthen preparation of beginning teachers. One particular focus of the grant is to better prepare Iowa's teachers to work with diverse learners including those schools with high poverty and high minority populations. The preparation also focuses on how to successfully implement the co-teaching/collaborative teaching model (English language learners and students with IEPs).
- iii. Support for the co-teaching/collaborative model: The Iowa DE continues to sponsor a number of workshops in the co-teaching/collaborative teaching model for local educators and teacher preparation educators. This is particularly designed for co-teaching of special educators and general education staff (assists IEP students in succeeding

classrooms that are the least restrictive environment). The model is also helpful in situations where English language learners are in general education classrooms.

- iv. Approval of teacher preparation programs: The Iowa State Board of Education has a statutory responsibility to approve Iowa-based teacher preparation programs. This approval process ensures that programs provide quality preparation experiences, not only in the campus-based coursework but also in field experiences and student teaching. The colleges/universities actively work with local school districts to provide varied field experiences/student teaching including high poverty and high minority school buildings so that pre-services educators are well prepared.
- v. Teacher licensure: The BOEE requires candidates for licensure in Iowa to have preparation to meet the diversity of student populations in Iowa. For example, one requirement for licensure of Iowa teachers for grades pre-kindergarten through three includes the following: "Prestudent teaching field experience with three age levels in infant and toddler, preprimary, and primary programs, with no less than 100 clock hours, and in different settings, such as rural and urban, socioeconomic status, cultural diversity, program types, and program sponsorship. (5) Student teaching experiences with two different age levels, one before kindergarten and one from kindergarten through grade three."

B. Next steps:

- i. Expand the co-teaching training: The work with co-teaching and collaborative teaching is an on-going process. It needs to be continued into the foreseeable future in partnership with Iowa's AEAs and the higher education institutions.
- ii. Continue the efforts with quality professional development: As has been noted throughout Iowa's plan, the emphasis on professional development is critical. The DE will continue to advocate for state funding of additional professional development days and TDAs for teachers so skills can be continuously improved.

VI. **Working conditions:** How is the state planning to improve the conditions in hard-to-staff schools?

A. Current policies and practices:

- i. Support for school administrators (1): As was noted in IV.A.i. Title I schools not meeting AYP have intensive assistance including work with the building administrator in creating a plan of improvement. The SINA team provides monitoring and assistance.
- ii. Support for school administrators (2): As part of the Student Achievement/Teacher Quality legislation, Iowa principals are required to evaluate teachers using the Iowa Teaching Standards. Training in "evaluator approval" was required for every school leader who evaluated teachers. Currently the "evaluator approval renewal" training materials are being completed for implementation in the fall 2007. "Evaluator approval" helps building administrators to evaluate and coach classroom teachers on those items that will have the greatest impact on student achievement.
- iii. Support for school administrators (3): During the 2006 legislative session, the Iowa General Assembly passed legislation that gives the DE the responsibility to work with professional organizations to establish a beginning administrator mentoring and induction program. The General Assembly appropriated \$250,000 for this purpose.

New administrators will be provided one year of mentoring to ensure they are supported in their initial leadership position.

- iv. Support for school administrators (4): The DE, in partnership with the School Administrators of Iowa, has received a State Action for Education Leadership Project (SAELP) grant through the Wallace Foundation. The grant activities include: (a). Working with Iowa's AEAs to provide training in Balanced Leadership to school leaders utilizing research from McREL about behaviors of principals that are linked to improved student achievement; (b). Refining the Iowa Leadership Standards and Criteria (similar to Iowa's Teaching Standards) that provide the foundation for administrator preparation programs at Iowa's higher education institutions as well as the evaluation of principals by their supervisors (generally superintendents). (c). Examining school governance to see determine barrier in traditional roles, responsibilities and authority structures in schools that prohibit concentration on leadership for student achievement; (d). Researching the role of strong building principals in improving student achievement (research being conducted in partnership with McREL).
- v. Equalized funding for Iowa's districts: Iowa's funding formula is designed to provide equity in expenditure as well as a uniform state aid allocation. The formula reduces disparities between property poor and property rich districts.
- vi. Support for teacher salaries: The Iowa General Assembly has provided additional support to districts to increase teacher salaries. A summary of allocations as well as the amounts of allocations can be seen at <http://www.state.ia.us/educate/fis/sft/alloc/index.html>. For example, the state provides financial support for a minimum teacher salary (primarily important for Iowa's more rural districts). As has been noted elsewhere, the 2006 legislative session invested in "Market Factor Pay" as well as an overall increase in teacher salaries statewide.

B. Next steps:

- i. Establish an Iowa Leadership Academy: Various educational partners in the state, including the School Administrators of Iowa, the Iowa State Education Association, the Iowa Association of School Boards, the DE and Iowa's administrator preparation programs are working together to establish an Iowa Leadership Academy to support the continuous development of school leaders in the state.
- ii. Completion of the Iowa Leadership Standards: The Iowa Wallace grant partners await the research results from McREL concerning the leadership behaviors of superintendents that are linked to student achievement gains. Once this information is received, the Iowa Leadership Standards and Criteria will be completed. This information will shape the training for evaluator approval as well as administrator preparation programs.
- iii. System efficiencies: As part of the 2006 legislative session, the Iowa General Assembly established a system efficiencies study to examine how delivery of education can be improved. A report is due to the General Assembly, Governor and DE no later than January 15, 2007.
- iv. Property tax equity interim study: Also as part of the 2006 legislative session, the Iowa General Assembly established a study committee to review and develop proposals that will equalize property tax rates applicable to the basic school foundation aid formula. A report is due to the General Assembly no later than January 1, 2008.